

Cultural Harmonization through Islamic Education: between Religious Moderation in Javanese Traditions in Penginyongan

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Abstract

The Penginyongan community, characterized by its egalitarian and open culture, possesses a unique cultural configuration distinct from the general Islamic traditions in Java. Their moderate and accommodative religious attitudes have prompted further study on the processes of cultural acculturation and assimilation with Islam. This research aims to explore the cultural expressions of the Penginyongan community and how these integrate with Islamic values, while also formulating a framework for culturally-based religious moderation and its application in Islamic education. Through an ethnographic approach, the findings reveal that Islam is harmoniously embraced within Penginyongan culture, as reflected in traditions such as lengger, ebeg, sedekah laut, and sedekah bumi. These cultural practices adapt without losing their local essence, creating a synergy between local wisdom and Islamic teachings. The egalitarian and open nature of the Penginyongan people demonstrates significant potential as a prototype for culturally-based religious moderation, contributing meaningfully to the development of an inclusive and culturally rooted model of religiosity and Islamic education in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Cultural Expression, Javanese Culture, Islamic Education, Moderation.*

Introduction

The relationship between humans and culture is inseparable, they are hand in hand to form the knots of life. In the process, humans organize themselves into a socio-cultural unit, a society. Humans, who in their collective form are called society, delivered, created, grew, and developed culture. Human existence necessitates culture, and vice versa. Human awareness of his experience encourages him to formulate formulations, limits, definitions, and theories about his life activities which are called culture.

Conceptually, Koentjaraningrat explained that the culture that exists in human beings or is unique to humans has at least three dimensions of form, namely; *First*, complex ideas, values, norms, regulations, human thoughts and so on, or often referred to as the cultural system; *Second*, the patterned activity (action) complex of humans in society or called the social system; *Third*, objects made by humans. Thus, culture is something that will affect the level of knowledge and includes a system of ideas or ideas contained in the human mind, so that in everyday life, culture is abstract. While the embodiment of culture is in the form of objects created by humans as cultured beings, in the form of behavior and objects that are real, such as patterns of behavior, language, tools of life, social organizations, religious arts, and others, all of which intended to help humans in carrying out social life (Koentjaraningrat, 1997).

Related to the scope of culture which is very broad and covers all aspects of life, including physical life and spiritual life, S. Gazalba formulates culture from a spiritual aspect, which becomes human nature is "a way of thinking and feeling, expressing oneself in all aspects of the life of a group of people. that make up society, in a space and a time (Gazalba, 1976)." In order to provide guidance on how humans live by cultivating, rules (norms) are born that govern human life. These norms of life are generally conceptualized in religious teachings. So that religion is an element that is inseparable from the socio-cultural life of the early stages of humans (Quraish, 2003).

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On the other hand, religion is not only seen as a cultural product (Rahardjo, 1996). In certain religions, the concept of a transcendent entity is known. Religion has a set of standard rules or norms that are coercive. In practice, religion which is practiced in daily life has a unique configuration. Religion participates in shaping, both positively and negatively, what humans understand, formulate and do in living this life. How religion and culture interact with each other is manifested in the form of religious rituals (Martin et al., 2001). Various cultural symbols and expressions, such as language, motion, signs, music, architectural works and other forms of craft used by humans to express religious experiences (Fitriyani, 2011).

Therefore, in a sociological perspective, religion is seen as a belief system that is embodied in certain social behaviors. Religion is related to human experience, both as individuals and as a group of people with behavior in accordance with the belief system and religion they adhere to. Individual and social behavior is driven by internal forces based on religious values that have undergone an internalization process. Religion has a role as a functionalization in an effort to neutralize or justify unpleasant life conditions (Mukhlishin et al., 2018).

Since its presence, Islam has played the role of one of the religions that has become a mercy to the universe. This conception has the consequence of making Islam a form of religious teaching that is able to protect the diversity of mankind. Islam as a universal religion really appreciates the culture that lives in a society, so that its presence in society is able to go hand in hand and in rhythm. Islam as a religion is capable of dialectics flexibly in understanding the living conditions of a society (Jandra, 2003).

In practice, the presence of religious education institutions, such as pesantren and surau, socio-historically plays the role of being an embryo as well as a place for the development of Muslim intellectual figures as well as preachers who are able to create a calm, peaceful, dynamic atmosphere, emphasizing the importance of social integration as a space for social cohesion. Through acculturation and assimilation processes, Islam can grapple with the cultures that exist in the archipelago.

However, the dialectical process between culture and Islam in a society is strongly influenced by the understanding of Islamic teachings themselves. This understanding at the praxis level then often becomes a latent conflict and even becomes a manifest conflict in the life of religious communities. Rigid construction of religious understanding (orthodox) places culture and Islam in diametrically opposite positions and has the potential to cause endless friction in people's lives (Abidin, 2009).

The above facts show that there is still concern about the relationship between religion and culture. This concern can actually be answered in a simple way, because if traced back this concern stems from theological fears about the relationship between the sacred and the profane. If the concept of religion is understood and internalized as a divinely oriented path, then the dualism of the sacred and profane will no longer be relevant. Because religion as something sacred can be sublimated in the core of culture, so that culture can be interpreted as the embodiment of the configuration of religious spirit (Jandra, 2003).

Manifestations of religion in various cultural variants can be seen in various national cultural expressions. The diversity of forms of cultural expression is influenced by various social, political, economic, historical, cultural, geographic location, and other backgrounds, each of which is unique and unique.

The uniqueness of cultural expressions, among others, is found in the "Penginyongan culture" that lives in the western part of Central Java, which includes Banyumas, Cilacap, Purbalingga, Banjarnegara, Kebumen, Tegal, Pemalang, and Brebes. The uniqueness of the Penginyongan community can be seen in the use of the language "inyong" to refer to "I" in everyday spoken language. In addition, the character of the populist, open and communal society known as "cablaka-blakasuta" (honest as it is) and "thok melong" (firm/brave/open) character is evidence of the difference with mainstream Javanese culture. The use of the word "inyong" is an entry point as well as evidence that these areas have a distinctive civilization derived from medieval Old Java, which is different from Anyaran Java, which positions the palace as the epicenter of its culture (Dede et al., 2022).

In the context of the Penginyongan culture, it is proven that Islam is able to be accepted, and even runs harmoniously through the expression of the incarnation culture to this day. This is evident in the cultural expressions that appear in the Penginyongan community, such as the traditions of *Lengger*, *ebeg*, *Sedekah laut*, *Sedekah bumi*, and other cultural expressions which in their journey have been able to go hand in hand with Islamic values. In fact, the format of acculturation and assimilation of culture and Islam in the Penginyongan community is able to modify cultural expressions that were previously contrary to the values of Islamic morality as a religion (Hayati & Herlinah, 2016).

The discussion regarding the format and at the same time the process of acculturation and assimilation of culture and Islam in the culture of carrying becomes an interesting central issue. It can be assumed that Islam in the penginyongan community does show moderate religious behavior. Islam in instructing shows a facet is relatively more "soft" and "friendly" towards local traditions and beliefs that existed before.

With a sociological background that is very different from Islam in Java in general, the Penginyongan society with a culture of egalitarianism and openness has a unique cultural configuration. This moderate and accommodative religious attitude and behavior led to further exploration and study of how the process of acculturation and assimilation of culture and Islam in the Penginyongan community, the extent to which the elements of the Penginyongan culture give color to Islam and vice versa, the extent to which Islamic elements are able to influence the Penginyongan culture, in what way and at what level the process occurs.

On the basis of these interests, this research was conducted to explore as well as map the variety and forms of cultural expression that live in the Penginyongan community. In addition, this research also seeks to reveal the process of acculturation and assimilation of Islam in the cultural expressions of penginyongan as an effort to find the meeting point of culture and religion as the basis of religious moderation in Indonesia.

Research Methods

This research employs a qualitative an anthropological approach to explore the interaction between Islam and the Penginyongan culture, focusing on their processes of acculturation and assimilation. Data collection involves in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis to capture the lived experiences and cultural expressions of the Penginyongan community. Key informants include local cultural practitioners, religious leaders, and community members who are directly involved in maintaining and practicing Penginyongan traditions such as *lengger*, *ebeg*, *sedekah laut*, and *sedekah bumi*.

The study also analyzes the sociological, historical, and religious dimensions of Penginyongan culture to understand how Islamic values are integrated into local traditions. Triangulation is applied to ensure data validity, combining multiple sources and perspectives. The findings aim to reveal the dynamics of cultural and religious interplay and formulate a framework for promoting religious moderation through cultural understanding in Indonesia.

Result and Discussion

The Culture and Cultural Expression

Koentjaraningrat defines culture as the power of the mind in the form of creativity, initiative and taste (Koentjaraningrat, 1997). In the dictionary, culture is defined as thoughts, intellect and results, while culture is the result of activities and creation of the human mind (such as beliefs, arts and customs). Culture is formed by groups of people with cultural similarities and closeness, so that it can be said that culture is something that can affect the level of public knowledge because it is a guide for its adherents.

Clyde Kluckhohn in his book "Universal Categories of Culture", as quoted by Koentjaraningrat, explains that there are seven elements of universal culture, namely: art, religion, knowledge system (culture), social organization, economic system, technology system and language. Based on this theory, according to Koentjaraningrat, physical culture is an expression of the cultural system and social system in every culture. So that knowledge systems, social organizations, economic systems, technological systems, language,

religion, and the arts will continue to survive if they are expressed or better known as cultural expressions. Cultural expression is an indicator of the sustainability of a culture.

In the process, high human mobility forces native cultural contact with outside cultures. Of course, between the two will influence each other, can tug of war or bargaining. This contact process, by anthropologists, is called the process of acculturation and assimilation. Assimilation according to Kuntjaraningrat, is defined as a social process that arises when there are: 1) groups of people of different cultures, 2) individuals as members of the group interact directly and intensively with each other for a relatively long time, 3) cultures from Each of these human groups change and adapt to each other. In other words, assimilation is a combination of two or more cultures, then becomes a new culture without any elements of coercion (Yusuf, 2005). Generally, the process of assimilation occurs very slowly and evolves and unconsciously produces a new culture which is nothing but a mixture of these interacting cultures. The result of this cultural mixing then becomes a collective agreement in community ties.

Not unlike assimilation, acculturation is also a form of social process that arises from the interaction of different cultures. Acculturation is defined as a social process that arises when a group of people with a particular culture is confronted with elements of a foreign culture in such a way that elements from a foreign culture are gradually accepted and processed into their own culture without causing the loss of the cultural personality itself.

In the context of Javanese society, the process of assimilation and acculturation begins when religion comes. Further according to Simuh (Simuh, 1996), Javanese people have distinctive cultural characteristics. The three characteristics are: *First*, pre-Hindu-Buddhist culture, when the people were still simple with animism and dynamism as the core of culture. *Second*, Javanese culture during the Hindu-Buddhist period, when Javanese culture received influence and absorbed elements of Hindu-Buddhism, which in the process was not only acculturation but a revival of Javanese culture by utilizing elements of Indian religion and culture, as well as enriching existing animist beliefs and dynamism. *Third*, Javanese culture during the Islamic empire, which began with the end of the Javanese Hindu kingdom to become Javanese Islam in Demak. The development of Islam in Java is not as easy as it is outside Java which only deals with local culture which is still modest (animism-dynamism) and is not so much infused with elements of Hindu-Buddhist teachings as in Java. This culture then gave birth to two variants of Javanese Islamic society, namely santri and abangan.

Penginyongan Culture

In Javanese society, there is a unique area which is in the western part of Central Java. This area is the border between Javanese culture and Sundanese culture. There is no definite term to refer to this area, but people often refer to it as the Penginyongan area or sometimes it is also called the Ngapak area. This Penginyongan area includes nine urban districts stretching from the north coast to the south coast, namely Pekalongan Regency, Tegal Regency, Tegal City, Brebes Regency, Banyumas Regency, Cilacap Regency, Purbalingga Regency, Banjarnegara Regency and Kebumen Regency.

The Penginyongan culture possesses unique characteristics, one of which is *cablaka*. *Cablaka*, as explained by Priyadi, represents a spontaneous and candid response to phenomena without concealment. Etymologically, Mardiwarsito traces the word *blaka* to Old Javanese "balaka" and Sanskrit "walaka," meaning frank, honest, and straightforward. Additionally, the term *blakasuta*, derived from *suta* meaning "child," signifies a pure and innocent manner of speaking, akin to the honesty of children. This openness manifests in a communication style that is direct and unembellished (*semblothongan*).

From an Islamic mystical perspective, Penginyongan culture integrates mystical and magical traditions into its practices, aligning them with Islamic values. As a region bridging Javanese and Sundanese cultures, Penginyongan stands out for its freedom and creativity, reflected in traditional arts like gamelan music and ancient Banyumasan songs. These arts not only entertain but also serve as mystical rituals for salvation and welfare, sustaining cultural identity and social cohesion (Supriyanto, 2023). On the other hand, Penginyongan culture is characterized by high rates of early marriage and divorce in the context of family

law. This phenomenon is influenced by the role of religious figures, particularly the *lebe* (Aprillianto et al., 2024), who hold significant authority within the community. The *lebe* is often regarded as more authoritative than formal legal institutions, leading to legal decisions that tend to align with the views of these religious figures. This reflects the weakness of formal legal authority in the Penginyongan region. This situation poses a serious challenge to raising legal awareness, particularly regarding family issues such as marriage and divorce, which require a more integrative approach between formal law and local cultural values (Dikuraisyin et al., 2024).

As a variant of Javanese culture, Penginyongan reflects centuries-old traditions that emphasize local values and social organization. According to Koentjaraningrat, Penginyongan culture is distinguished by its unique accent, ancient social structures, life-cycle ceremonies, and distinctive art forms, solidifying its position as a dynamic and integrative cultural system (Ahimsa-Putra, 2019).

Religious Moderation Base on Culture

Etymologically, the word moderation comes from the Latin *moderatio*, which means moderation (no more and no less), or means self-mastery from excess and deficiency. The Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBBI) provides two meanings related to the word moderation, namely: First, reducing violence; Second, avoidance of extremes. In English, the word "moderation" means not exaggerating or moderate, which in its use the word moderation is interpreted as average, core, standard, non-aligned. The word moderation is also congruent with the word moderate which has a function as an adjective, which means something that is moderate, middle, neither extreme right nor extreme left. In general, moderate can be interpreted as prioritizing balance in terms of beliefs, morals, and character, both when treating other people as individuals, and when dealing with state institutions.

The word moderation is also known in Arabic as the word *wasath* or *wasathiyah*, which is equivalent to the word *wasathiyah*. The word *wasath* has an equivalent meaning with the words *i'tidal* (fair) and *tawazun* (balanced). In Arabic the word *wasathiyah* is also interpreted as the best choice. From the derivation of the word *wasath*, it can be interpreted fairly and the middle way between the two extreme ways. Some linguists explain that the word *wasath* means everything that is good according to its object. In Arabic there are two words that are often contrasted with the word *wasath*, namely *al-gulum* and *tasyaddud*. Even though the last word is not mentioned in the Qur'an, its derivation can be found in other forms, such as *syadid*, *syidad*, and *ayadd* which have strong and firm meanings. When connected with a religious context, the term "excessive" can be used to refer to people who have extreme characteristics, exceeding the limits and provisions of Islamic law (Ridwan & Zain, 2021a).

In the Religious Moderation book published by the Ministry of Religion in 2019, religious moderation can be measured based on 4 indicators, namely: 1). National commitment; 2). Tolerance; 3). Anti violence; 4). Accommodating to local culture. Through these four indicators, it can be measured how strong the level of moderation in religion is in the community, conversely through these indicators the level of vulnerability can also be mapped. This vulnerability becomes a necessity to be mapped as an effort to prevent religious friction while at the same time strengthening the understanding of religious moderation in society. In addition to these four indicators, Quraish Shihab also provides important indicators of religious moderation in aspects of people's lives, according to him there is always a balanced behavior between personal benefits on one side and benefits on the other. Moderation can be understood as an effort to strike a balance between individual rights and community rights (Shihab, 2019).

Based on the indicators above, the fourth indicator is related to cultural concepts and practices of cultural expression. How religious practices and behavior that are accommodative to local culture can be used to see the extent of willingness to accept religious practices that accommodate local culture and traditions. In general, people with moderate character tend to be more friendly in accepting traditions and culture in their religious behavior, as long as they do not conflict with the principles and principles of religious teachings. A religious tradition that is flexible, flexible, and not rigid is marked by a willingness to accept religious practices and behavior that do not merely emphasize normative truths, but also accept religious practices that are based on virtue (Ridwan & Zain, 2021b).

Acculturation and Assimilation of Islam Education and Penginyongan Cultural Expression

Communities in the Penginyongan area have unique and distinctive cultural expressions. Its territory, which lies between the Pasundan culture and the Yogyakarta-Solo palace culture, gives its own color to its culture. The delivery area includes Brebes Regency, Tegal Regency, Pemalang Regency, Banyumas Regency, Cilacap Regency, Purbalingga Regency, Banjarnegara Regency and Kebumen Regency.

In this study, the authors take four areas as a description of the Penginyongan community. *First*, Brebes Regency as an illustration of the northern coastal region and in some parts influenced by Sundanese culture, *second*, Banyumas Regency as an illustration of the central region. *Third*, Cilacap Regency as an illustration of the south coast region and in some areas influenced by Sundanese culture. *Fourth*, Kebumen Regency as an illustration of the south coast region and in some areas is influenced by the culture of the Yogyakarta-Solo palace.

The cultural expressions of the Penginyongan community are very diverse and distinctive. The arts that develop in the Penginyongan community include *Lengger/Ronggeng/Tayub*, Calung, Ebeg, Sintren, Shadow Puppets, Kuda Lumping, Cowong and so on. Meanwhile, in terms of activity rites, they include slametans after the death of a person starting from 1 (one) to 7 (seven) days, then 40 days, 100 days and 1000 days, *Sedekah lauts* and *Sedekah bumis*, ceremonies asking for rain and so on.

Of the various art forms and rituals that exist, the author focuses on folk dance known as *Lengger* and alms ceremonies. Both *Lengger* and alms ceremonies are the focus of the writer because both exist in the four regions, are the embodiment of folk art and both of them experienced acculturation after Islam came.

Lengger is a folk art that is often found in the Penginyongan area (Lysloff, 2012). *Lengger* is sometimes called *Ronggeng* or *Tayub*. *Lengger* is a folk dance, where the dancer also sings accompanied by gamelan beats or more specifically referred to as a set of Calung. Apart from that, this dance also involves the audience dancing with the main dancer.

In addition, *Ronggeng* as a profession requires that he not marry and have children throughout his life (Meiliana, 2023). As a profession, sometimes a *Ronggeng* can be asked for help as a ghowok. Ghowok is a kind of work to help a groom-to-be, so that when he gets married, he is adept at guiding his wife to have intercourse. In carrying out this profession, a *Ronggeng* will live with a male client who is still a virgin for a few days and teach him how to make his future wife happy sexually.

The current condition is that most of the population in the Penginyongan area are predominantly Muslim and have a moderate character. The people in the Penginyongan area can be said to be very accommodating of local culture. Local traditions contained in the Penginyongan area which include concepts or norms, human activities and actions, and in the form of works produced by the community undergo a process of acculturation with Islam. This process of acculturation between religion and local culture eventually gave birth to the concept of "local genius", so that a unique creation was born, which did not exist in the area of origin of its cultural influence.

In *Lengger* art, acculturation starts from Indian Hindu culture from certain mystical sects which is then absorbed into a new belief to pay respects to fertility to Dewi Sri according to the beliefs of the local community. Then, when most of the population in the Penginyongan area adhered to Islam, the belief in this tradition again shifted and formed a new cultural format in accordance with the accepted norms of religious belief.

Uniquely, although they still carry out these various rituals, the *Lengger* artists adhere to the Islamic religion and carry out all the basic Islamic teachings contained in the Pillars of Islam. It was also the Islamic teachings that they believed in that later eliminated several rituals that were felt to be contrary to Islamic teachings. Thus, Islam and culture in the Penginyongan community have found a harmonious link (Nawawi, 2024). The existence of the two does not negate one each other, but is able to walk in harmony and has created a

distinctive and unique configuration of cultural expressions in accordance with the understanding of Javanese Islam, especially Penginyongan Islam.

The stages of the *lengger* art which were eventually not practiced and are no longer found include: the ritual of opening the curtain and ghowokan. Both of these activities are considered to be very contrary to Islamic teachings, even categorized as an act of adultery which has the consequences of a grave sin in Islamic teachings. So most of the *Lengger* dancers who adhere to Islam no longer want to carry out this ritual. *Lengger* dancers are now the same as women in general, namely they can have a normal household with the man they love and have children.

Furthermore, there are also activities that then shift and experience modifications with the presence of Islam. The first is the saweran tradition, namely giving tips to *Lengger* dancers by giving a sum of money into the kemben at the front of the dancers. In addition, geolans with erotic nuances have also begun to shift. *Lengger* dancers no longer perform movements that can provoke the audience's sexual desires and lust. Often the *Lengger* dancers perform the *Lengger* dance according to the request of the audience or the responder. Including in terms of clothing. If previously the dancers used a kind of kemben for their upper body, now several times they are found wearing a kebaya over the layer of the tank they wear, according to the request of the responders.

In addition, there is an alms ceremony, as a manifestation of the community's gratitude for natural products, which is a ritual that is carried out throughout the Penginyongan area. This ritual is named according to the geographical location or the object being grateful for. In coastal areas it is known as *sedekah laut*, and in agricultural areas it is known as *sedekah bumi* (Tiani, 2020).

At first, these ceremonies were carried out with belief in supernatural powers that inhabited certain areas. For example, in the south coast region which includes the Cilacap and Kebumen Regencies, Nyi Roro Kidul is known (Kristianto et al., 2024), while in the north coast region, namely Brebes district, Nyi Rantam Sari is found. Both are beliefs that existed long before Islam entered the Penginyongan area. Respect for both is intended both as an effort to "ask for permission" to be able to catch fish as well as an expression of "gratitude" for the marine products obtained.

The process of acculturation between Islam and local culture can be seen from the ritual processes carried out by the people of the coastal areas, both in the districts of Brebes, Cilacap and Kebumen. All *sedekah laut* activities are addressed to Allah SWT, but even though the goal is the same, the process has different characters and activities.

Next is the *Sedekah bumi* ritual in the Penginyongan Area. Alms Earth is carried out in all districts which are the focus of the author's research. *First, sedekah bumi* in Brebes district. The arrival of Islam brought several changes to the *sedekah bumi* procession in this region. The accommodative Islamic pattern which is the majority in the Brebes Regency area makes this ritual still carried out with a few modifications that reflect cultural acculturation. This ritual is now no longer made to honor the supernatural beings in the renjeng lake, but as a form of gratitude to Allah SWT. Instead, the ceremony is tahlil, ratibul hadad, and a joint prayer led by village elders.

Second, sedekah bumi in Banyumas district. In the Banyumas Regency, acculturation at the alms giving ceremony can be seen from the name attached to this ritual, namely Grebeg Sura. Sura itself is the Javanese designation of the month in the Hijri calendar, namely Muharram. Grebeg Sura is generally held on Tuesday Kliwon or Friday Kliwon. Like what happened in Brebes, the local Islamic community adheres to accommodative Islam. So that the ceremony is still being carried out, it's just that what was previously addressed to Dewi Sri, is now a form of gratitude to Allah SWT. Uniquely, the village is also inhabited by residents with beliefs other than Islam (Christians, Buddhists, and adherents of beliefs) and help preserve this culture by praying according to their respective beliefs followed by carrying out rituals led by local traditional leaders which are complemented by offerings in the form of tenong. filled with food wrapped in banana leaves and mountains filled with produce.

Third, sedekah bumi in Cilacap district. One of the areas that practice *sedekah bumi* is in the Kalikudi community, Adipala sub-district, Cilacap. Another name for this activity is "memeti bumi" which was previously addressed to Dewi Sri for the abundance of crops. But now, this activity is no longer addressed to Dewi Sri, but as a form of gratitude to Allah SWT who has provided sustenance in the form of crops. Its implementation also refers to the Javanese version of the Hijriyah calendar, which falls in the apit month (the month between Shawwal and Dzulhijjah). Other than that, the series of rituals has not changed.

Fourth, *Sedekah bumi* in Kebumen district. In this district, almsgiving has several mentions, namely in Karangduwur it is known as "Paguyuban", in Sempor it is known as "Baritan" in Argopeni Village it is known as "Sadranan". Unlike the three previous regencies, this ritual was originally aimed at Javanese mythology, namely Dewi Sri as a symbol of fertility. With the arrival of accommodative Islam, this ceremony is addressed to Allah SWT as a form of gratitude for the harvest.

From the various alms in the Penginyongan area, both in the form of *sedekah laut* and *sedekah bumi*, it shows that acculturation between Islam and local culture has become something harmonious. The values contained in each procession are maintained. What has changed is only the form of cultural expression. The symbols have not changed but the meaning has changed. If previously the ritual was aimed at worshiping supernatural beings, namely Nyi Roro Kidul, Nyi Rantam Sari, and Dewi Sri, now it has shifted as an expression of gratitude to Allah SWT for the abundance of sustenance that has been given, as well as a prayer and hope that he will always be given safety. and blessings in earning a living, both as fishermen in the *sedekah lauts* ritual, and farmers in the *sedekah bumis* ritual.

The Format of Religious Moderation on Penginyongan Cultural Expression

The format of religious moderation can be found in the cultural expressions of the penginyongan community which is still being practiced today. Based on the constellation of religion and culture in the tradition of the Penginyongan community, at least the relation to religious moderation can be revealed as follows: That all existing cultural expressions, especially expressions of the artistic movements of the *Lengger* dance and *sedekah laut* or *sedekah bumi*, are all cultural expressions which are understood to have conformity with the values religion. The fragments in both cultural expressions are appropriate and in line with the overall values of religious teachings that are believed. Such as fasting, tirakatan, ruwatan, and others are the values of the teachings of all religions which focus on spiritual practice in order to get closer to God Almighty.

In addition, the moderation format can also be found in the aspect of the balance of the pattern of relations between humans as a communal society and the relationship between humans (society) and God Almighty. This pattern of relations as a whole is also adopted in the cultural expressions of penginyongan. Both, both the relationship between humans and God and the relationship between humans as a society can be positioned in a balanced manner, there is no single position in the embodied cultural expression. Every form of expression is always understood as a form of the pattern of the relationship between the two. In the language of religion (Islam), this relationship is called the terminology *hablu min Allah wa hablum min an-Nas*, the relationship between humans and Allah and the relationship between humans and each other.

First, the pattern of vertical relations between humans and God. This relationship is divine which places God as a super ordinate position in the life of the living community. This pattern is realized in all its various cultural expressions, both in the form of dances and traditional sacred rituals. As previously explained, there are traditions of tirakatan, fasting, rituals, and so on in every fragment of the Penginyongan culture. Like the rituals of fasting and prayer before performing the *lengger*, *ronggeng*, and *ebeg* dances, all of which are understood and interpreted as spiritual practices to invoke and ask for protection, blessings, and at the same time success in the dance performances being performed. Even if viewed from a historical perspective, this *lengger* dance is a manifestation of Dewi Sri who is symbolized as the giver of fertility for the universe which is believed in ancient Javanese mythology.

Likewise in the ritual expressions of *sedekah laut* and *sedekah bumi* or other alms ceremonies which have the same meaning but different mention of cultural terms. The alms ritual tradition is also understood and

interpreted as an expression of gratitude for all the blessings and sustenance that God has given to the Penginyongan community. The abundance of sustenance for fish in the ocean is grateful in the form of a *sedekah laut* ritual. And the fertility of agricultural land and plantations is grateful in the form of *sedekah bumi* rituals. In fact, the meaning of the ceremonies and rituals that are carried out is not limited to divine relations alone, but also the existence of a balance between humans and God and humans and nature. This ritual can be seen as explained by the perpetrators of the alms-earth and marine alms culture, that the offerings they offer and float in the ocean are interpreted as a form of gratitude to God, as well as a form of concern for the fish and marine biota that live in the ocean. The offerings consisting of rice, fruit and other foods are floated in the sea with the meaning and at the same time providing food for fish and marine biota. Meanwhile, in the almsgiving ritual, crops and buffalo heads which are cut off and buried in the ground are also interpreted as a form of giving food to worms and other living things that have played a role in maintaining soil fertility.

Second, the pattern of relations between human beings. This second relationship is horizontal, which brings together humans and other humans in a communal community bond. This pattern of relations is very important in people's lives, because in addition to maintaining togetherness in social life, this relationship is also a strengthening of multicultural awareness. With a solid multicultural understanding, it can prevent the fragility of social relations which so far may have tended to create dominant majority-minority, rich-poor, and so on. Inequality in relations that has been occurring in people's lives can potentially trigger social conflicts at the same time. Therefore, apart from being a cultural ritual, the *sedekah laut* and *sedekah bumi* ritual can also be understood as a form of effort to strengthen social cohesion in a plural society.

With the establishment of these horizontal relations, it has given birth to socio-cultural interactions between sub-societies in a culture of carrying, both among religious adherents and between religious adherents (Muttaqin & Noor, 2022). This process of horizontal relations has necessitated a process of "take and give" between fellow people and a process of absorbing and being absorbed in traditions and culture in the culture of the Penginyongan community. A cultural meeting forum like this is what makes the boundaries of the religious and cultural traditions of each human being fluid and run harmoniously, thereby creating a cohesive bond that binds ethnicity, religion, acculturation, or new cultural ties/hybrid culture (hybrid culture), without the occurrence of the process of negating and removing other identities, such as religious beliefs and understanding. Thus, the process in this relationship necessitates the principle of recognition and respect for others. At the same time, it is also able to create an open dialogue forum between communities which is the main pre-requisite for the realization of harmony in society, especially in the penginyongan community.

Furthermore, from a cultural perspective, all religions and beliefs in Indonesia have actually developed a culture and tradition that requires religious values as a way of life together regardless of differences in religion (Ridwan; Zain, 2021), ethnicity, ethnicity and race. Especially in terms of the character of the Penginyongan community, which has an egalitarian typology, as it is and is open, making the Penginyongan community have the potential to become a prototype of culture-based religious moderation. Both in the dance art tradition which is manifested in the art of *lengger*, *ronggeng*, or similar dances, as well as in the ritual traditions of *sedekah laut*, *sedekah bumi*, or similar rituals, all of them have proven capable of acculturation into new cultural expressions with religious nuances. This new cultural expression is able to run harmoniously and be accepted by the Penginyongan community, even with minimal friction or conflict.

In addition, the concept of religious moderation is also in line with religious traditions that are accommodative to local culture. Such as the variety of cultural expressions of penginyongan which are still practiced today, both in the form of dance expressions to traditional ritual ceremonies. The various cultures that are practiced are always inseparable from the teachings, symbols, and religious values that are believed (Muchimah et al., 2024). Moderate religious understanding has provided an open space for cultural expression, and conversely culture also provides accommodation for religious values. Even the accommodation of the two, can be seen from every shift in cultural celebrations that exist in the Penginyongan community. Ornaments and cultural symbols also change and shift to follow the pattern of life of the Penginyongan community. Things that are considered not in line with religious principles and

values are abandoned and are no longer practiced, while cultural traditions that are not contradictory continue to be practiced and even preserved until now.

Thus, in the context of preaching in particular, and the archipelago in general, religious moderation is a middle ground amidst cultural diversity in Indonesia (Chotimah et al., 2025). Moderation is a meeting point for understanding religion and the culture of the archipelago which goes hand in hand, and does not negate each other between religion and local wisdom. Not contradicting each other but seeking solutions tolerantly. Moderation must be understood and developed as a shared commitment to maintain a perfect balance, in which every member of society, regardless of ethnicity, ethnicity, culture and religion wants to listen to one another and learn from each other to train the ability to manage and overcome differences between them.

Conclusion

Based on the studies in this study, it can be understood that religion and culture can form a pattern of living behavior in which both are able to work in harmony, especially manifested in the artistic expression of the *Lengger* dance and the *Sedekah laut/Sedekah bumi* ceremonies. Religion and culture in the Penginyongan community are able to show a distinctive configuration, and do not negate each other. Therefore, the configuration between religion and culture that exists in the Penginyongan community is very important to be preserved and maintained. The expressions of *lengger* and *sedekah laut/sedekah bumi* have been able to be interpreted as meeting points between religious teachings and cultural traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation by the Penginyongan community. This meeting point stems from the character of moderate Islam. In the future, this format of religious moderation with a cultural basis can be developed as a *da'wah* strategy in people's lives. So that religious teachings are not understood as something that is constant and rigid, but are able to run harmoniously and be cultured in Indonesian society.

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